

ORCHARD LAKE SCHOOLS CAMPUS COMMUNICATOR

ST. JOHN PAUL II LITURGICAL CENTER ♦ ST. MARY'S PREPARATORY ♦ POLISH INSTITUTE OF CULTURE & RESEARCH

"How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!" ~ Psalm 133:1

SEPTEMBER 2026



UNITY IN COMMUNITY

UNITY in the BECOMING

The Unity Tower is both a symbol and a vision of the unity of all Orchard Lake Schools graduates — past, present and future. Though the specific moments evolve through the eras of Orchard Lake, we find unity in the ongoing mission of **“becoming.”**

For generations, students have arrived on this campus as young people in the process of becoming something more — more knowledgeable, more capable, more confident, more faithful and more prepared to serve others. The experiences that shape that journey have changed considerably since 1885. The mission behind them has not.

Decades ago, Fr. Walter Ziemba described Orchard Lake as *“a place where dreams are not laughed at, where vision is not dismissed, where youth is respected, and where faith is quietly and confidently practiced.”* His words endure because they describe something larger than any particular program, building or generation. They describe the kind of place Orchard Lake aspires to be — a place where becoming is possible.

Perhaps that is why the Unity Tower is such an appropriate symbol for Orchard Lake today. Its restoration, inspired by the vision and generosity of the OLSM Class of 1975, honors what generations before us built and preserved, while preparing this historic landmark to stand watch over generations still to come. *“Today, it’s our turn to care for it,”* wrote the Class of ’75 alumnus whose lead gift launched the effort, calling on fellow alumni to join him in supporting the project.



ON THE COVER

UNITY IN COMMUNITY

Our OLSM Student Council Officers and representatives gather for the start of the 2026-27 academic year, knowing all members of the OLS campus community, near and far, belong to something bigger than themselves. Unity is community.

Cover Photo by Tara Johnson

And that restoration is now well underway. This fall, we expect to complete the interior and exterior cleaning of the Tower, install its new windows and complete the new roof. In the spring, work will continue with the installation of the cross, Unity Tower signage and architectural lighting.

Meanwhile, work continues on the **Lillian DeRose Constantakis Center for Eaglet Student-Athletes**, a transformational renovation of the Dombrowski Fieldhouse. The project will create a new home for our Girls Division student-athletes, a new Fitness Center benefiting all Eaglet student-athletes, and expanded first-floor locker room facilities.

These projects are very different in purpose, but they share something important. One preserves and renews a landmark that connects us to generations past. The other transforms an existing facility to meet the needs of students in the midst of their own becoming. Both reflect the same responsibility: to honor what has been entrusted to us while providing for Orchard Lake’s tomorrow.

The buildings will change. The campus will change. The experiences of our students will change. But across those generations, we remain united by something greater: the opportunity and responsibility to help young people become who they are called to be.

**We inherit something. We build something.
And, together, we continue becoming.
Thanks to all of you who make it possible.**

THE UNITY TOWER RESTORATION FUND

A LANDMARK. A LEGACY. A SHARED COMMITMENT.

The Unity Tower honors every graduate of the Orchard Lake Schools. Inspired by a leadership gift from the Class of 1975 and strengthened through the support of the Orchard Lake Ambassadors, this historic restoration will preserve one of our campus's most recognizable landmarks while adding a cross that reflects the faith and mission that have guided the Orchard Lake Schools since 1885.

Join generations of Orchard Lake alumni, family, and friends in completing this lasting symbol of our shared legacy.

MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY

Your gift to the **Unity Tower Restoration Fund** will help preserve this historic landmark while ensuring it continues to inspire generations of Eaglets for years to come.

WAYS TO GIVE:

Scan the QR Code to make a secure online gift



Mail your gift to:

UNITY TOWER RESTORATION FUND
Orchard Lake Schools | 3535 Commerce Road
Orchard Lake, MI 48324

DONOR RECOGNITION

Every donor will be recognized as a Founding Supporter of the **Unity Tower Restoration Fund**.

Donors making a gift of \$100 or more will receive a commemorative Unity Tower baseball cap.
Donors making gifts of \$5,000 or more will also be eligible for a personalized engraved brick paver within the Unity Tower Dedication Circle, subject to design specifications and available space.

For more information, contact Chris Czarnik at cczarnik@orchardlakeschools.com or call 248-392-9267



OLSM College Counselor ANN BARTUS Receives

Notre Dame GOLDEN GUIDE AWARD



Congratulations to our Senior Academic Dean/ College Counselor, Ann Bartus, on receiving the University of Notre Dame Golden Guide Award, a prestigious honor recognizing outstanding college

counselors who go above and beyond to guide and support students through the college search and admissions process.

This award is especially meaningful because it reflects the voices of the students Ann serves. OLSM graduate Hudson Brzustewicz (P'26), state champion baseball player and Notre Dame baseball commit, nominated her and shared: "Mrs. Bartus is one of the sweetest and most helpful people I know. She truly cares about her students and always goes out of her way to make us feel valued and supported. She deserves this award for the positive impact she has on so many students every day."

Hudson's words capture what Ann has brought to OLSM throughout her nine years of service: a deep commitment to every student, a genuine sense of belonging, and an unwavering belief that students thrive when they know they are supported. She embodies the spirit of the Orchard Lake Schools — one community, many voices; different strengths, one community; united by our students and inspired by our community.

As a Certified Educational Planner (CEP) and a professional member of the Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA), Ann brings exceptional expertise to her work. The CEP is the highest level of professional endorsement for college advisors, requiring a master's degree, significant experience, a comprehensive examination covering 30 colleges, and ongoing professional development that includes visiting 70 college campuses every five years.

"Mrs. Bartus is one of the sweetest and most helpful people I know. She truly cares about her students and always goes out of her way to make us feel valued and supported. She deserves this award for the positive impact she has on so many students every day."

-Hudson Brzustewicz (P'26)

But beyond her expertise, Ann's greatest impact is personal. She builds bridges, creates belonging, and helps students see possibilities for their futures. She reminds us that unity is knowing we belong to something bigger than ourselves — and that every student deserves to know they belong. We are incredibly grateful for Ann Bartus's dedication to OLSM and to the students and families she serves. Congratulations, Ann, on this well-deserved recognition

Follow Us

For more information, visit the OLS website at orchardlakeschools.com, follow us on social media, and look for our email news!

- facebook.com/olsnews
- youtube.com/@orchardlakeschools9385
- instagram.com/orchardlakeschools

SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS

Throughout this academic year, we're excited to share highlights of our senior students, role models of our campus community, and how they help unify our community. Throughout this year, read more about groups of seniors serving the community, sharing purpose, and promoting teamwork, rising to lift one another up. **God. Family. St. Mary's.**

Kayla Bauss



"Here at St. Mary's we have many opportunities to help others - put others first."

Parents
David & Jennifer
(Senior Class Representative, Girls Division)

Siblings
Four older brothers (OLSM alumni)

Middle School
St. Joseph Catholic School, Lake Orion

Things I love about OLSM
Sisterhood & Community

Athletics/extracurriculars
Volleyball, Basketball

Advice to other students
"Try to build OLSM friendships. This is your family for life."

Career aspirations
Elementary education teacher

Michael Kassa



"OLSM brotherhood. We're all family here."

Parents
John & Brenda

Siblings
Older sister (Nola)

Middle School
St. Fabian, Farmington Hills

Things I love about OLSM
Walking to class with friends. Pizza sticks.

Athletics/extracurriculars
Wrestling, Track (freshman-sophomore years)

Advice to other students
"Don't wait to start trying harder. Start now."

Career aspirations
Certified Public Accountant (CPA)

WELCOME BACK!

Come check out our new arrivals!

HOURS: MON - FRI | 7:00 - 4:00
248.392.9964

(HOURS MAY CHANGE WHEN SCHOOL IS NOT IN SESSION.)





9th Annual
ALUMNI & FRIENDS
CHALLENGE CUP

Golf Outing

Play 18 holes on one of Michigan's premier championship golf courses.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14
OAKHURST GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB
7000 Oakhurst Lane | Clarkston

Event Details

Check In | 8:30 AM
Breakfast | 8:30 AM
Shotgun Start | 10 AM
Boxed Lunch | 12 PM
Cocktail Reception | 3 PM
Dinner Reception | 3:30 PM

50/50 RAFFLE | PRIZES
Closest to the Pin, Longest Drive & More!

SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE

Call Lisa Gray: (248) 392-9974 or
email: lgray@orchardlakeschools.com

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP FUND

\$250
per golfer

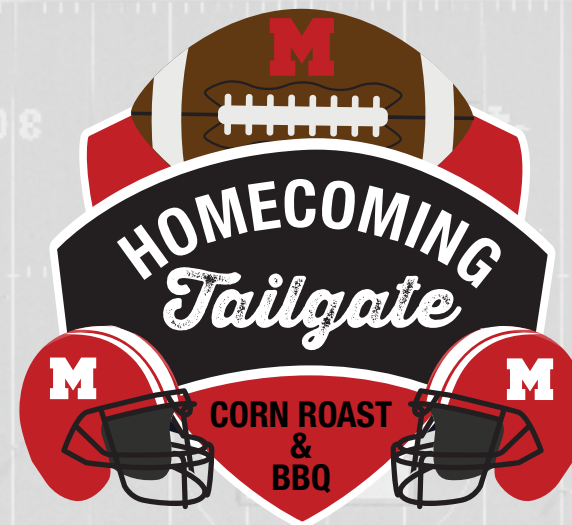
Scan QR Code to register

RSVP by September 8

For more information contact:
Lisa Gray at lgray@orchardlakeschools.com



Join us in celebrating an OLSM Tradition!
OLSM Students & Families, Alumni & Alumni Parents



Friday, September 18 | 5-7 PM

DINING HALL

Bring your family

Don't miss the opportunity for your children or grandchildren to stand with the Eaglets on the red turf during pregame festivities.

We hope to see you there!



Alumni Football Fridays

FIELD-SIDE FOOD, FUN & FESTIVITIES FOR ALUMNI!
Join your fellow Eaglet alumni in the designated field-side Alumni Tent for pregame food as well as the perfect seat to watch the big game!

Sept. 4 | OLSM vs. King
Sept. 11 | OLSM vs. St. John Jesuit
Sept. 18 | OLSM vs. St. Francis De Sales | Homecoming*
*Pregame Homecoming tailgate | Dining Hall | 5-7 PM
Oct. 9 | OLSM vs. CC
Oct. 23 | OLSM vs. U of D



For more info:
Contact Alumni Relations Officer, Robert Mazur at 248-830-9711 or rmazur@orchardlakeschools.com



EVER FORWARD!

ZAWSZE DO PRZODU!

STRATEGIC MASTER PLANNING PROJECT

The “Ever Forward” Strategic Plan has been approved, and the Orchard Lake Schools has initiated a new path. We are moving on to the second phase of the Master Plan for campus. “Ever Forward” charts a path forward for the OLS and its three major operational divisions.

That path goes in the direction Fr. Dąbrowski envisioned – it leads toward OLS providing the best possible organizational structures and activities to enable the spiritual formation and educational growth of the people OLS serves.

For more information, visit www.orchardlakeschools.com/Ever-Forward

BACK-TO-SCHOOL "FIRST LASTS"

For 141 years, students have walked the grounds of Orchard Lake St. Mary's to begin something far greater than another school year. The first last full week of school in the 2026-27 academic year was filled with friends, teachers, classrooms, traditions, and a Catholic community that will know them personally, challenge them academically, and expect them to grow.

The day also began with a special reminder of that tradition, as alumnus Fr. Whalen returned to bless

our classrooms and the students and teachers and staff. There will be difficult classes, new friendships, successes, setbacks, prayer, competition, laughter, hard work, and countless moments that will shape the young men and women they become.

That is what a St. Mary's education is about . . . not simply preparing students for what comes next. Forming them for it.

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year.



New technology, teachers and teamwork.



Freshman Orientation Days



Senior Sunrise for the Girls Division

Photo by Tara Johnson



THE MARY PROJECT
AT ORCHARD LAKE SCHOOLS

Please visit and enjoy the NEW
WALKING ROSARY AND REFLECTION AREA
in the Marian Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes at St. Mary's Preparatory.

**WE ARE ASKING FOR DONATIONS TO HELP DEFRAY
THE COST OF THIS ADDITION TO THE GROTTO.**



3 WAYS TO DONATE:

- 1. **PURCHASE A BRICK PAVER.** Order forms are available at the gate, by scanning the QR code, or online at www.orchardlakeschools.com/ways-to-give
- 2. **LEAVE A DONATION** in the donation box at the Grotto inside the candle area.
- 3. **MAIL A CHECK** (payable to The Mary Project) to:
The Mary Project | 3535 Commerce Road | Orchard Lake, MI 48324



SCAN CODE

For naming opportunities, please contact Maureen Gross at
themaryproject@myyahoo.com.
All donations are tax deductible. EIN: 82-5453994



Jingle all the Way Christmas Tree Lighting

AT ORCHARD LAKE ST. MARY'S

PRIVATE EVENT FOR OLS FAMILIES, ALUMNI & FRIENDS

SUNDAY, NOV. 22
4-8 P.M.

TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY | 6:15

TRZCINSKI QUAD

Crafts, Candy & Stockings for the Kids

Visit Camels, Donkeys & Reindeer

Visit by Santa & His Reindeer

Gift Baskets Drawing

Holiday Photographer

Christmas Carolers

Warm & Cozy Food

Christmas Market

Lighted Train Rides

Live Music

Fr. Daniel Whalen (P'18)

UNITES CAMPUS IN PRAYER

When Prep alumnus Fr. Daniel Whalen (P'18) returned to OLSM on Friday, August 21, it was more than a visit. He blessed faculty, staff, students, and every classroom at his alma mater, including the library and science buildings, SMAC athletic facilities under construction, dorm, Trzcinski Quad, Burkacki Academic Center (BAC), and Clarence & Lillian Constantakis Prep Classroom Building!

This day was about experiencing a part of what a St. Mary's education is all about – the moments that have and will continue to shape the young men and women they become. Fr. Whalen knows this quite well.

***"St. Mary's helped me each
and every year to grow
deeper with the Lord."***

"I started classes here at the Prep in August of 2014," said Fr. Whalen, "and it was really the start of my sophomore year when the idea of the priesthood became stronger as a vocation calling." By his

senior year, he went on discernment weekend and to see Fr. Solanus Casey's beatification. He fell in love with the priesthood while a student of our campus community and saw that calling which really confirmed that his mission was with the priesthood.

"It was here at St. Mary's through the religion classes and the teachers and staff that really helped encourage me, to pray more, and who to call and talk to," he added. "Just having the opportunity to go to Mass Wednesday and Friday and having the ability to go to the Grotto and pray and back to the chapel for Eucharistic Adoration time, to find the love of Christ . . . St. Mary's helped me each and every year to grow deeper with the Lord."

He has been very busy, especially since his priestly ordination by Detroit Archbishop Edward J. Weisenburger on May 23, 2026, at the Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Detroit. He was appointed full-time priest support to the Hope Renewed Family of Parishes (effective July 1, 2026), including his primary focus, Divine Child Parish, Dearborn, and its schools.



Photo by Sophia Stacy





Fr. Witold Kaczmarzyk



Photo by Mike Castellucci

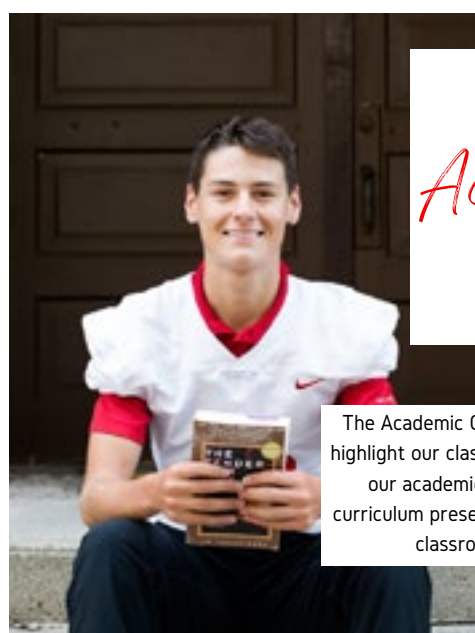
Polish-born Witold Kaczmarzyk came from the Ostrow Wielkopolski, Kaliska Diocese in Poland where he was quite a marathon runner before coming to Orchard Lake in August 2014 to complete his theological studies and earn both a Master of Divinity and a Master of Arts in Systematic Theology from SS. Cyril & Methodius Seminary graduating summa cum laude in 2019.

Fr. Kaczmarzyk was ordained to the priesthood in 2019 and appointed to the Archdiocese of Denver. He became pastor of Christ on the Mountain Catholic Church in Lakewood, Colorado, neighboring Denver in February, 2026. He rides his scooter to his parish and it gets quite a bit of attention from parishioners, which seems to be helping welcome the community back to the Church. Fr. Kaczmarzyk hopes they are coming for his sense of humor but knows his scooter is quite a draw that unifies his community. And while some people are sharing the photos of his scooter rides, it gives him even more to share on the church Facebook page he is in the process of rebuilding.

2016 Football State Championship Three-peaters

It's the 10-year anniversary of the 2016 championship team – the team that three-peated as State Champions! These alumni are coming home to OLSM as our special half-time guests this season where we'll honor them on the red turf. What's more, these alumni champions will also be here to cheer on the 2026 team in their quest to win their third straight state championship!





St. Mary's Preparatory
A co-divisional Catholic high school

Academic Open House

Thursday, October 8th
4:00-7:00pm



The Academic Open House at St. Mary's Prep is a dynamic family experience designed to highlight our classroom offerings, hands-on learning, and faith formation. Families will tour our academic buildings, meet teachers, administrators, students, and staff, attend curriculum presentations tailored to each academic pathway, and participate in interactive classroom experiences that showcase our unique approach to learning.

admissions@stmarysprep.com

www.stmarysprep.com

248-392-9963



CLASS OF 1977 Prepares to

CELEBRATE 50TH REUNION

It's truly a special year for the OLSM Class of 1977 as they prepare to celebrate their 50th reunion at Founder's Day 2027! But this class is already very busy planning special ways to celebrate their brotherhood. "The momentum and brotherhood of the Class of 1977 are truly remarkable," said Robert Mazur, Alumni Relations Officer. "What stands out is that these alumni aren't just coming back for a 50th reunion — they're coming back for one another, and they're coming back to St. Mary's."

Many are coming home to campus on Thursday, September 17th for a pizza gathering at Gino's followed by Friday's campus tour, homecoming corn roast and BBQ tailgate at the dining hall, and to watch our defending football state champs take on Toledo St. Francis De Sales. But there's even more reason to celebrate! Their classmates from the 1977 State Championship football team are being honored in a special recognition ceremony at the game!

The Class of 1977 alumni are creating memories together all over again. That kind of loyalty and camaraderie is what makes the St. Mary's brotherhood so special. Fifty years later, they're still showing up for each other, still celebrating each other and still proud to be Eaglets. Their enthusiasm is a wonderful example of what it means to remain connected to St. Mary's for a lifetime.

What a way to kick off your St. Mary's Preparatory 50th Reunion, Class of 1977!

And there's more!

Cheering on Fellow Eaglet, Jim Paciorek (P'78)

They'll also witness fellow OLSM Class of 1978 alumnus, Jim Paciorek, honored for his major OLSM, college and pro sports athletic accomplishments at the recognition ceremony! "Jim Paciorek is St. Mary's greatest athlete!" said Robin Goddard, Director of Athletic Facilities/OLSM Prep School & Sports Historian. "When you look at all the statistics, no single OLSM athlete has garnered all the recognition he earned in his four years as an Eaglet."

JIM PACIOREK (P'78)

AT ST. MARY'S PREPARATORY (1974-78)

1st Team All State
Football – 3 Times – Kodak All American (First Team)
UPI Player of the Year for Michigan
Basketball – 2 Times
Baseball – 3 Times
QB Undefeated State Football Champions, 12-0
Undefeated State Basketball Champions, 27-0
Had 14 Varsity Letters – Also Ran Track

AT MICHIGAN (1978-82)

Football 2 Years – Rose Bowl/Gator Bowl
Baseball 4 years
3 Times All-Big 10 – Player of the Year 1982
Big 10 Medal of Honor Winner
1st Team All American
NCAA All-Tournament Team
5th Baseball Player to make Hall of Fame, 2020

PROFESSIONAL SPORTS

Milwaukee Brewers, 8th Round pick, 1982-87

After the Milwaukee Brewers, Jim went on to Japan and played for 3 years where he had made the All Star Team 3 times and received the Golden Glove Award.



REFLECTION

BY FR. BERNARD WITEK
DIRECTOR | ST. JOHN PAUL II LITURGICAL CENTER

The Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on September 8th. It originated in connection with the Feast of the dedication of a church to Mary, now the Church of St. Ann, in Jerusalem in the 6th century. Tradition holds that this is where the house of Mary’s parents, Joachim and Ann, stood and where she would have been born. The Feast was first be celebrated in Rome in the 8th century.

St. John Paul II, on September 8, 2024, during the general audience referring to the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, addresses her as the *purest dawn of the Redemption*:

In the Words of

ST. JOHN PAUL II

Shortly after the Council, my great predecessor Paul VI decided to speak further of the Blessed Virgin. In the Encyclical Epistle Christi Matri and subsequently in the Apostolic Exhortations Signum Magnum and Marialis Cultus he expounded the foundations and criteria of the special veneration which the Mother of Christ receives in the Church, as well as the various forms of Marian devotion - liturgical, popular and private - which respond to the spirit of faith.

3. The circumstance which now moves me to take up this subject once more is the prospect of the year 2000, now drawing near, in which the Bimillennial Jubilee of the birth of Jesus Christ at the same time directs our gaze towards his Mother. In recent years, various opinions have been voiced suggesting that it would be fitting to precede that anniversary by a similar Jubilee in celebration of the birth of Mary.

In fact, even though it is not possible to establish an exact chronological point for identifying the date of Mary’s birth, the Church has constantly been aware that Mary appeared on the horizon of salvation history before Christ. It is a fact that when “the fullness of time” was definitively drawing near - the saving advent of

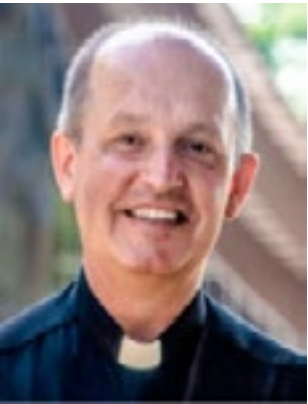
This feast, very important to popular piety, leads us to admire in Mary the Child, the purest dawn of the Redemption. We are contemplating a little girl like every other, yet at the same time the only one who was “blessed among women” (Lk 1: 42). Mary was the immaculate “Daughter of Zion”, destined to become the Mother of the Messiah.

In his encyclical letter *Redemptoris Mater* “On the Blessed Virgin Mary in the life of the Pilgrim Church” (March 25, 1987), he refers to the Blessed Virgin Mary as the *Morning Star*:

Emmanuel - she who was from eternity destined to be his Mother already existed on earth. The fact that she “preceded” the coming of Christ is reflected every year in the liturgy of Advent. Therefore, if to that ancient historical expectation of the Savior we compare these years which are bringing us closer to the end of the second Millennium after Christ and to the beginning of the third, it becomes fully comprehensible that in this present period we wish to turn in a special way to her, the one who in the “night” of the Advent expectation began to shine like a true “Morning Star” (Stella Matutina). For just as this star, together with the “dawn,” precedes the rising of the sun, so Mary from the time of her Immaculate Conception preceded the coming of the Savior, the rising of the “Sun of Justice” in the history of the human race.



A Shepherd of Faith, Scholarship and Polonia: Honoring FR. BERNARD WITEK, SDS



This month, we’re blessed to share more about Fr. Witek’s prolific contributions to the Orchard Lake Schools, from unifying our campus community to honoring the faith and culture of Polonia.

Since his arrival at Orchard Lake in 2022, Fr. Bernard Witek, SDS, has been a faithful shepherd, scholar, and friend to the Orchard Lake Schools and the wider Polonia community. He brought to campus a distinguished record as a biblical scholar and educator who had taught and led institutions across Europe and Africa.

As Director of the St. John Paul II Liturgical Center, Fr. Witek’s scholarly work and spiritual guidance have reflected his lifelong mission to integrate faith and intellectual formation. He soon established a meaningful ministry rooted in prayer, pastoral care, and meaningful relationships, offering comfort and stability during challenging moments, including the closing of SS. Cyril & Methodius Seminary.

His contributions to campus life have been especially evident in his dedication to the sacramental life and

traditions of the Polish American community. He guided daily Mass offerings and weekend Masses in both English and Polish, while enabling the Shrine Chapel to welcome the celebration of the Latin Mass on Sundays. He shepherded the completion of the St. John Paul II Altar Project and welcomed the faith and culture of Polonia through Polish First Sunday Masses and celebrations of Poland’s religious observances, anniversaries, and patronal feasts.

As director of the Liturgical Center within the Archdiocesan Shrine of St. John Paul II — one of only a handful of Jubilee Year pilgrimage sites — Fr. Witek helped strengthen Orchard Lake’s role as a place of prayer, pilgrimage, and Catholic formation.

In July, the Orchard Lake Schools announced that Fr. Witek’s Provincial Superior had called him to conclude his OLS assignment and return to the Salvatorian community, effective January 2027. We are eternally grateful for his faithful priestly ministry, pastoral care, and dedication to strengthening OLS’s Catholic identity and historic mission to serve the Church and Polonia – all of which have unified our campus community in faith, education, culture and tradition, pillars of the Orchard Lake Schools and our 141-year history.

ZAPRASZAMY

You are invited to join us for Polish 1st Sunday!

A special Mass at the Orchard Lake Schools to pray for Polonia

Sunday, Oct. 4th • 1:00 PM

- Polish Dinner after the Mass in the Dining Hall - Cost: \$20
- Please RSVP to the dinner by Wednesday, September 30th.
- For more information, call (248) 602-7579 or bernardwitek@yahoo.com.

at the Shrine of St. John Paul II, celebrated by Fr. Bernard Witek



THE ORCHARD LAKE SCHOOLS
joyfully celebrates a special Mass commemorating

THE FEAST OF ST. JOHN PAUL II

Sunday, October 18



FEAST DAY CELEBRATIONS ON SUNDAY, OCT 18

Holy Mass
WITH FR. BERNARD WITEK
& Filarets Choir
1:00 PM

Polish Dinner after Mass
CAMPUS DINING HALL
Cost \$20
Please RSVP by Oct 14

Pizza is available for children under 16 for \$5

To RSVP, call (248) 602-7579 or email bernardwitek@yahoo.com

POLISH ARMED FORCES DAY & THE FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

BY DR. JOHN RADZIŁOWSKI
DIRECTOR, POLISH INSTITUTE OF CULTURE & RESEARCH



On August 15th, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Since the time of the early Church, this feast marks the date when the Mother of God was taken into heaven, body and soul.

In August, two massive Red armies bore down on Poland. Most foreign diplomats fled as the Russians approached Warsaw, except for the Papal Nuncio, Cardinal Ambrogio Ratti (the future Pope Pius XI) and foreign newspapers predicted the fall of the capital city. But the Poles were not ready to surrender in spite of being outnumbered and cut off from outside assistance. The people rallied in support of the army under Gen. Józef Piłsudski, with volunteer units of workers, students, women mobilizing to defend Warsaw while noncombatants dug trenches and gathered supplies.

In Poland, this day has long had special meaning and is a national holiday. In rural areas, on this feast Mary was referred to as Our Lady of the Herbs (Matka Boska Zielna), and people would bring flowers, crops, and herbs to church to be blessed. The mid-August date marked the start of harvest time in the villages. It was also a time of pilgrimages to Marian shrines near and far, a tradition that continues today in Poland and in many Polish communities in the USA.

The feast of the Assumption took on even greater significance in 1920. In 1918, Poland had re-established a shaky independence after 123 years of foreign subjugation. But in the summer of 1920 that new freedom was threatened by a massive invasion from Bolshevik Russia. The Bolsheviks, a Russian socialist party led by Vladimir Lenin, had overthrown the Russian monarchy and unleashed a devastating civil war on Russia with the aim of spreading violent revolution throughout Russia and then to the rest of Europe and the world. (In Russia alone, 10 million people would die between 1919 and 1922.) With the Bolsheviks' internal enemies in retreat, in 1920 Lenin was ready to settle scores with Poland and to push violent revolution into the rest of Europe which was exhausted and radicalized in the aftermath of World War I.

On August 12, Red Army commander Mikhail Tukhachevsky ordered a massive assault on Warsaw with the order "over the corpse of White Poland, lies the path to worldwide conflagration!" Polish forces defending the city, under the command of Gen. Józef Haller, fought desperately to hold back the onslaught. Radzymin, a small town just east of Warsaw, changed hands seven times. With the Red Army engaged at Warsaw, to the south Piłsudski threw a secretly assembled reserve force into the fray against the Bolshevik flank. On the day of the Feast of the Assumption—August 15—Polish forces broke through the Bolshevik lines, sweeping deep into the enemy's rear. Within days Poland was saved. For many Poles, the timing of the victory was no coincidence, and victory was credited to Mary's intercession.

Since 1923, the Feast of Assumption has also been commemorated as the Feast of Armed Forces (Święto Wojska Polskiego). Special Masses and observances mark the importance of Mary's intercession and protection and the role of the armed forces in protecting and sustaining the country's freedom. Here in America and especially at Orchard Lake, Polish Americans have also marked this important holy day, honoring the Blessed Mother as the patroness of Poland and of Orchard Lake.

UPDATE

BY ANIA BIECIUK
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR POLONIA AFFAIRS, POLISH
INSTITUTE OF CULTURE & RESEARCH AT ORCHARD LAKE



SEPTEMBER AT ORCHARD LAKE: A NEW SEASON BEGINS

There is something unmistakable about September at Orchard Lake. After the busy days of summer, students return, classrooms fill, and the campus takes on that

familiar energy of a new beginning. Soon, Polish schools throughout our community will begin their academic year as well, continuing the important work of passing our language, culture, traditions, and faith to another generation. To all our students, teachers, parents, and families beginning a new academic year, we send our very best wishes.

WHAT A SUMMER IT HAS BEEN

Our Faces of Polonia: 250 Years of the USA exhibition will soon come to a close. Before the faces leave our walls, come spend some time with them. And remember, you do not have to wait for a special event to visit us. The Galeria is always available by private appointment.

On August 16, we gathered to commemorate Polish Armed Forces Day, honoring generations of courage, service, and sacrifice. Our special thanks go to the veterans and veterans' organizations who joined us, to our many guests, and to Fr. Bernard Witek for celebrating Mass.

Then, on August 29, Polonia took to the streets for the Polish Day Parade in Warren. The music, colorful costumes, floats, organizations, children, and families celebrating side by side created an energy that is difficult to capture in words. Our own Galeria Manager, Elijah Majeski, had the pleasure of serving as one of the parade judges.

A WORLD PREMIERE HONORING SAINT JOHN PAUL II

On Saturday, September 19 at 6 PM, the Polish Institute will present the World Premiere Opera Concert Honoring Saint John Paul II at the magnificent Sweetest Heart of Mary Church in Detroit. The timing is intentional. September 18–19 marks the 39th anniversary of Saint John Paul II's historic visit to Michigan in 1987, and nearly four decades later, we will gather in Detroit to remember that visit through music.

At the center of the evening will be internationally performing Polish soprano Dominika Zamara, a native of Wrocław whose artistic journey has been shaped in both Poland and Italy. Her international career has taken her to stages around the world, with a repertoire spanning opera, sacred music, chamber works, art song, and contemporary compositions.

The world premiere will also celebrate the work of Maestros Antonio Bellandi, Tiziano Bedetti, and Wiesław Rentowski, whose compositions make this evening a living artistic tribute to Saint John Paul II. The collaboration of Polish and Italian artists is particularly fitting in honoring a man whose own life connected Poland so profoundly with Rome and the wider world. The concert is free, but registration is requested. Those who register will also have a chance to be selected for a special VIP encounter with Dominika Zamara. Registration is available at **PICROL.org**.

Dominika's visit will extend beyond the concert stage. She will join us at Orchard Lake St. Mary's for a special lecture and Q&A with music students and anyone interested in pursuing music, sharing firsthand the education, discipline, challenges, and experiences behind an international career in classical music.

On September 18, she will also teach a masterclass for university students in our Galeria. For us, this is an especially meaningful part of her visit: not simply presenting accomplished artists to our community but creating opportunities for the next generation to learn directly from them.

LITERARY SALON RETURNS SEPTEMBER 25 AT 7 PM

Music gives way to literature just a few days later when our Literary Salon returns to the Galeria on Friday, September 25 at 7 PM. We are thrilled to welcome Ania Fink for the launch of her English-language book, *33 Churches*. Ania is no stranger to Orchard Lake. She visited our campus and Galeria last year and participated in the Friends of Polish Art Fine Arts Show, making it especially enjoyable to welcome her back, this time as an author and guest of our Literary Salon.

SEPTEMBER: A MONTH TO REMEMBER

On September 1, we commemorate the anniversary of Germany's invasion of Poland in 1939 and the beginning of World War II in Europe. On September 17, we remember the Soviet invasion of Poland, another painful chapter in Poland's wartime experience. Between these two historic dates, on September 8, the Catholic Church celebrates the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a particularly fitting feast as children and families begin another school year.

AND OCTOBER IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

On Sunday, October 4 at 3 PM, our friends at the American Polish Cultural Society will present *CHOPINIANA: A Musical Tribute to Frédéric Chopin*, featuring pianist Cezary Karwowski at the American Polish Cultural Center in Troy.

Then, on October 9, we will have the distinct pleasure of welcoming Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz of Texas to Orchard Lake. A longtime professor and leader at Texas A&M University, Dr. Mazurkiewicz has devoted decades to strengthening relationships between Poland and the United States through education, agriculture, business, and international exchange. His longstanding commitment to Poland and Polonia has made him an important voice in building relationships between our two countries, and we are honored to bring his experience and perspective to Orchard Lake.

Dr. Mazurkiewicz will speak with students at Orchard Lake St. Mary's in a special lecture exploring



the fascinating historical ties between Texas Polonia and Poland. Polish-American history extends far beyond any one city or state, and this will be an opportunity for our students to discover another chapter of that story and the generations of Poles who helped shape communities across Texas and the American experience. Later, Dr. Mazurkiewicz will join Richard Walawender, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland in Detroit, for a special business roundtable at Orchard Lake. Bringing together their experience in education, business, international relations, and Polonia, the conversation will look not only at the relationships generations before us built between Poland and America, but at how we strengthen those relationships for the future.

And on October 10, the American Polish Cultural Society, together with the Polish American Congress, Michigan Division, will co-host the Polonia Celebrates 250 Years of America Gala at the American Polish Cultural Center in Troy, celebrating Polonia's enduring place in the American story.

A NEW SEASON, AND MUCH MORE AHEAD

We look forward to welcoming you to the Galeria, seeing you at our programs, and continuing this story together. **Do zobaczenia w Orchard Lake. Niech ta jesień przyniesie nam wiele pięknych spotkań, wspólnych chwil i nowych powodów do dumy z naszej polskiej kultury i dziedzictwa.**

THE
POLISH INSTITUTE OF CULTURE & RESEARCH
P R E S E N T S

THE WORLD PREMIERE OPERA CONCERT

HONORING
Saint John Paul II
ON THE
39th ANNIVERSARY
OF HIS VISIT TO MICHIGAN
SEPTEMBER 18-19, 1987

Polish Institute
of CULTURE
& RESEARCH
AT ORCHARD LAKE



FEATURING SOPRANO
DOMINIKA ZAMARA



MAESTRO
ANTONIO BELLANDI



MAESTRO
TIZIANO BEGETTI



MAESTRO
WIESŁAW RENTOWSKI

THE MAESTROS

SWEETEST HEART OF MARY CHURCH
4440 RUSSEL STREET • DETROIT, MI
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19th | 6:00 PM

FREE ADMISSION • RESERVE YOUR SEAT AT WWW.PICROL.ORG

THE POLISH INSTITUTE LITERARY SALON SERIES

JOIN US FOR THE NEXT LITERARY SALON
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2026 | 7:00 PM



FEATURING
ANIA FINK
AUTHOR

IN CONVERSATION ABOUT HER NEW BOOK
**33 CHURCHES –
33 KOŚCIOŁY**

Following my previous book, *36 Churches – 36 Kościołów*, this new bilingual volume highlights 33 historic Polish-American parishes in the Archdiocese of Detroit founded before World War II. Through original hand-drawn sketches, photographs, and historical research, this guide-catalog captures the beauty, faith, and heritage of each church and the communities they continue to inspire. Because of Orchard Lake's profound significance to Polish-American heritage, this book includes dedicated pages on the Orchard Lake institutions.

The evening will include a PowerPoint presentation on the history of these churches and Poles in the USA and Michigan, the sketching process, a Q&A, and a book signing.

FREE EVENT.
PLEASE RESERVE.
www.picrol.org

GALERIA
ORCHARD LAKE MI 48064
2021 Indian Trail
Orchard Lake, MI 48064

AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE
33 Churches – 33 Kościoły
is available on Amazon
and in person at the event.

RECEPTION AND AUTHOR MEET & GREET TO FOLLOW

Polish Institute
of CULTURE
& RESEARCH
AT ORCHARD LAKE

ŻYCZYMY UDANEGO
ROKU SZKOLNEGO 2026-2027!

Drodzy Uczniowie, Nauczyciele i Rodzice
**Witamy w Nowym
Roku Szkolnym**



POLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS
IN THE METRO DETROIT AREA

Polish Language Center of Ann Arbor
General Pulaski Polish Language School
in Garden City
Saint John Paul II Polish Language School
in Hamtramck
Father Dąbrowski Polish Language Center
in Orchard Lake
Adam Mickiewicz Polish Language School
in Sterling Heights

POLISH INSTITUTE UPDATE

Polish Institute
of CULTURE
& RESEARCH
AT ORCHARD LAKE

Wishing You a Great
2026-2027 School Year!

St. Mary's Students, Teachers & Staff
**WELCOME BACK
TO SCHOOL**



Polish Institute
of CULTURE
& RESEARCH
AT ORCHARD LAKE

Father Dąbrowski Polish Language Center
Szkoła Języka Polskiego
Ks. Józefa Dąbrowskiego

Drodzy Uczniowie, Nauczyciele i Rodzice

**Witamy w Nowym
Roku Szkolnym**

ŻYCZYMY UDANEGO ROKU SZKOLNEGO 2026-2027!



Zajęcia lekcyjne będą się odbywały
w budynku Adam Cardinal Maida
Alumni Library.



SHRINE OF ST. JOHN PAUL II: JUBILEE YEAR PILGRIMAGE SITE

Did you know that the Archdiocese of Detroit has designated our Shrine Chapel at Orchard Lake one of 12 Detroit-area pilgrimage sites ahead of the Jubilee 2025; a place for pilgrims to visit and receive a plenary indulgence?

The Church celebrates ordinary jubilees every 25 years. In December 2024, the late Pope Francis ushered in the Holy Year 2025 by opening the Holy Doors of St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome for a year of grace, forgiveness and renewal — centered on the theme, “Pilgrims of Hope.”

In 1470, Pope Paul II established the practice of celebrating jubilees every 25 years, instead of 50, to allow more people to experience a Holy Year within their lifetimes.



IN MEMORIAM . . .

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.
+ MAY THEY REST IN PEACE +

REVEREND CANON JOHN MIKALAJUNAS (C'65, S'69)
July 30, 2026 ~ Age 82
Utica, New York

JAMES MICHAEL REGAN (P'67)
June 26, 2026 ~ Age 76
Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan

+ Remembering our loved ones who recently passed into eternal rest.
You can view previous years by visiting our website at: www.orchardlakeschools.com/in-memoriam
To inform the OLS of the passing of a friend or alumnus of the Orchard Lake Schools, email us at: info@orchardlakeschools.com

MONTHLY ENROLLMENTS

Throughout the year, donors to the Orchard Lake Schools enroll their loved ones in the “Friends of the Orchard Lake Schools”. Prayers are offered at every mass at the Archdiocesan Shrine of St. John Paul II for those names enrolled. These names are those that have been added from the month of July.

ANGELA MARIE (GOETZ) BARRETTE	PAM CORRELL SHAWN ELWELL	REYNALDO NG
MATTHEW BARRETT	DELMAR HARKENRIDER	EVA GRACIELA PARRALES
KATHY & VINCE CALLAHAN	ROBERT KRIZANEH	VIERDA DE REINEL
PATRICIA CATHERINE	ROYENE ELENA MASON	HAROLD THORN, JR.
		ROSE THRUSH

For more enrollment information, please contact Lisa Gray at lgray@orchardlakeschools.com

September 2026

Upcoming EVENTS highlights

- 1Girls Golf vs. Notre Dame Prep | Wabeek CC | 3:00 PM
Varsity Soccer vs. Detroit Country Day | 7:00 PM
- 4Varsity Football vs. Detroit King | 7:00 PM
Alumni Football Friday Tent
- 4-7NO SCHOOL (Labor Day Weekend)
- 6POLISH 1st SUNDAY | 1:00 PM Mass | 2:00 PM Polish Dinner in Dining Hall
Galeria Open to the Public | 12:00 – 3:00 PM
- 8Classes Resume
FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
Girls Golf vs. Mercy | Wabeek CC | 3:00 PM
Varsity Soccer vs. Ann Arbor Greenhills | 7:00 PM
- 9Varsity Volleyball vs. Toledo Notre Dame Academy | 7:00 PM
- 10Girls Golf | Oakland County Division 2 Championship | Links of Crystal Lake | 7:00 AM
Girls Golf vs. Country Day | TBD | 3:00 PM
Varsity Soccer vs. Toledo Central Catholic | 6:00 PM
- 11Varsity Football vs. Toledo St. John Jesuit | 7:00 PM
Alumni Football Friday Tent
- 12Cross Country | Bret Clements Bath Invitational
- 149th Annual Alumni & Friends Golf Outing | Oakhurst Golf & Country Club
- 14-18OLSM Homecoming Spirit Week
- 15Varsity Soccer vs. Cranbrook | 7:00 PM
- 16Girls Golf | DM & VC Invitational | St. Clair Shores Golf Club | 8:30 AM
Varsity Volleyball vs. Mercy (Middle School Night) | 7:00 PM
- 17Girls Golf vs. Marian | Wabeek CC | 3:00 PM
Varsity Soccer vs. Pontiac | 7:00 PM
- 18Student Lecture with Soprano Dominika Zamara | Galeria
Homecoming Corn Roast & BBQ Tailgate | Dining Hall | 5:00 – 7:00 PM
Homecoming Jim Paciorek Recognition Ceremony | Milewski Field | 6:30 PM
Alumni Football Fridays Tent | South Endzone | 7:00 PM
Varsity Football vs. Toledo St. Francis De Sales | Homecoming Game | 7:00 PM
Special Homecoming Recognition – Class of 1977 Football State Champs
- 19Cross Country | 58th Annual Holly-Duane Raffin Festival
Homecoming Dance | 7:00 – 10:00 PM
The World Premier Opera Concert by PICR | Sweetest Heart of Mary Church | 6:00 PM
- 22Girls Golf vs. Toledo St. Ursula | TBD
- 25Cross Country | 2026 Waterford Fall Classic
Polish Institute Literary Salon Series with author Ania Fink | Galeria | 7:00 PM
- 28Girls Golf | CHSL Championship | Flint Golf Club | 10:00 AM
- 30Varsity Volleyball vs. Detroit Country Day | 7:00 PM

September 2026

MASS schedule

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

9:00 AM	FR. WITEK POLISH*	SEMINARY CHAPEL
9:00 AM	FR. MCDONELL LATIN	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE
11:00 AM	FR. WITEK ENGLISH	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE
1:00 PM	FR. WITEK POLISH*	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

7:00 PM	FR. WITEK ENGLISH	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE
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SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

9:00 AM	FR. WITEK POLISH*	SEMINARY CHAPEL
9:00 AM	FR. MCDONELL LATIN	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE
11:00 AM	FR. WITEK ENGLISH	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

9:00 AM	FR. WITEK POLISH*	SEMINARY CHAPEL
9:00 AM	MSGR. BROWNE LATIN	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE
11:00 AM	FR. WITEK ENGLISH	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE
1:00 PM	FR. WITEK POLISH*	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

9:00 AM	FR. WITEK POLISH*	SEMINARY CHAPEL
9:00 AM	MSGR. BROWNE LATIN	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE
11:00 AM	FR. WITEK ENGLISH	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE



*Polish Mass is now live streamed at: www.youtube.com/@orchardlakeschools9385/streams

"Then press "Live" for the current Sunday live broadcast."

DAILY MASSES

MONDAY-FRIDAYS	7:00 PM ENGLISH	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE
SATURDAYS	9:00 AM ENGLISH	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE

SHRINE OPEN HOURS

SUNDAY & SATURDAY	8:00 AM – 9:00 PM	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE
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EXTRA-LITURGICAL DEVOTIONS

1 ST THURSDAY 9/3	MASS 7:00 PM *FR. WITEK	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE
1 ST FRIDAY 9/4	MASS 7:00 PM * FR. WITEK	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE
1 ST SATURDAY 9/5	MASS 9:00 AM * FR. WITEK	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE
THURSDAY 9/17	BIBLE STUDY AFTER MASS 7:45 PM	SEMINARY CHAPEL
FRIDAY 9/18	DIVINE MERCY PRAYERS 7:45 PM	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE
	KRAŁ BIBLIJY 8:00 PM	SEMINARY CHAPEL

CONFESSIONS

MONDAY-FRIDAY	6:00 – 6:55 PM	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE
SATURDAYS	8:00 – 8:55 AM	ST. JOHN PAUL II SHRINE